

### REMARKS

The subject of the claimed invention is a vertical shaft melting furnace. This Amendment is submitted to distinguish that subject more fully from the smelting furnace in the prior art disclosure of Rogers. Claims 65, 68, 71 and 74 are thus amended to refer more specifically to a load of "stacked" metal pieces in the shaft. New independent claim 77 also refers to a load of stacked metal pieces in the shaft, and further distinguishes from the smelting furnace of Rogers by stating that the shaft has "a configuration that is tapered radially inward from the upper region to the bottom region." New dependent claims 78 and 79 are added to recite additional features that distinguish the invention from the prior art disclosure of Rogers.

Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance, and requests allowance of claims 65-79.

Respectfully submitted,



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